Constantin C. Arion

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Constantin C. Arion (also known as **Costică Arion**;[1][2] June 18, 1855 – June 27, 1923) was a Romanian politician, affiliated with the National Liberal Party, the Conservative Party and, after 1918, the People's Party. He served two terms as Minister of Religion and Public Instruction, one term as Minister of Agriculture, and another one as Interior Minister before World War I. His career peaked in 1918, when he was Minister of Foreign Affairs.

A young lawyer who supported political reform, Arion moved progressively to the right, and, ca. 1885, became involved with the political club *Junimea*. As a Conservative policymaker and disciple of Alexandru Marghiloman, he rewrote legislation on education reform and brought the Romanian Orthodox Church under the control of its high clergy. Like Marghiloman, Arion supported the Central Powers during most of World War I, a position which seemed to carry most weight during the 1918 armistice. His participation in the Marghiloman government recovered for Romania the region of Bessarabia, but the subsequent return of Ententist forces made him a political suspect. He spent the remainder of his life as a marginal.

In addition to his presence in political life, Arion was an art patron, university professor, and philanthropist. He was the brother of Virgil Arion, and the father of Dinu C. Arion.

Contents [hide]

1 Biography
- 1.1 Early life and career
- 1.2 Conservative politico
- 1.3 World War I and after

2 Notes

3 References

Constantin C. Arion

Arion in 1918

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania

In office
March 5, 1918 – October 23, 1918

Monarch	Ferdinand I
Preceded by	Alexandru Averescu
Succeeded by	Constantin Coandă

Minister of Administration and Interior of Romania

In office
March 28, 1912 – October 14, 1912

Monarch	Carol I of Romania
Preceded by	Alexandru Marghiloman
Succeeded by	Take Ionescu

Minister of Religion and Public Instruction

In office
July 7, 1900 – February 13, 1901

Preceded by	Constantin Istrati
Succeeded by	Spiru Haret

In office
December 29, 1910 – October 14, 1912

Preceded by	Spiru Haret
Succeeded by	Constantin G. Dissescu

Minister of Agriculture and Royal Domains

In office
April 5, 1913 – December 31, 1913

Preceded by	Ioan Lahovary
Succeeded by	Alexandru Constantinescu-Porcu

Personal details

Born	June 18, 1855 Bucharest
Died	June 27, 1923 (aged 68) Bucharest

Biography [edit source]

Early life and career [edit source]

The Arions were an old Wallachian family, first attested in Brăila ca. 1696, and integrated into the boyar aristocracy in the mid-18th century.[3] Its reputation was stained by two members: Constantin Eracle Arion and Anton I. Arion, who had committed massive bank fraud throughout the early 1870s.[4]

Constantin (born in Bucharest on June 18, 1855) and Virgil C. Arion were the sons of Appellate Judge Constantin Arion and Sevastița, née Urlățeanu.[5] Constantin C. followed in his father's footsteps, graduating in Law from the University of Paris (Doctorate in 1876) and in Political Science from Sciences Po.[5] Upon his return to Romania, he was made Cabinet Secretary of Foreign Minister Vasile Boerescu, then head of Political Affairs, but left in 1881 to set up legal practice.[5]

Two years later, he was also employed by the University of Bucharest Faculty of Law, where he lectured in business and admiralty law. He received tenure in 1913,[6] and became editor of the academic journal, *Revista Critică de Drept, Legislație și Jurisprudență* ("Critical Review of Law, Legislation and Jurisprudence").[7] Virgil had a similar career in law and academia, while a third brother, Scarlat Arion, was a landowner and a Romanian consul in Bitola.[8]

C. C. Arion made his debut in politics as a National Liberal, ran in the elections of 1884, and was elected to the Assembly of Deputies in Ilfov County.[5] At the time, he was dedicated to the cause of representative democracy, and paid homage to the leadership of Romanian radicalism.[5]

By the mid-1880s, C. C. Arion had become jaded with the ideals of liberalism, and was hostile toward National Liberal Premier, Ion Brătianu. During 1886, Arion, Take Ionescu and Nicolae Fleva were the main "United Opposition" agitators who tried to seal a pact with the *Junimea* conservatives, in an effort to topple the National Liberals.[9] He first attended *Junimea* club meetings around 1885, when he met and befriended the *Junimist* leader, Titu Maiorescu. The group had past its prime, and, as Maiorescu recorded in his private notes, the sessions attended by Arion were "rather dull".[10] The conservative association had been traditionally hostile toward Arion's "unproductive" and "lawyerly" liberalism. As *Junimist* poet-critic Mihai Eminescu once wrote, the Arion brothers were "the runts, the intellectual and moral plebs, ... everything basest and most degraded that one can expect to find in the cities of the Romanian nation".[11]

In later years, Arion focused on his cultural projects. From 1896, he was president of the national school and public libraries board (*Casa Școalelor*), where he employed the services of poet George Coșbuc.[5] His legal expertise was demanded in Romania v. Nicolae Gregorescu, a *cause célèbre* for honor crime in Romania. Arion represented the civil party, Aurelia Stelorian, whom Georgescu had vitriolaged; his adversary in court was another famous lawyer, Barbu Ștefănescu Delavrancea.[12] Arion and Delavrancea both were celebrity guests at the Bucharest lecture tour of Joséphin Péladan, the French mystic and novelist (1898).[13]

Conservative politico [edit source]

Returning to public life as a "constitutionalist" conservative, Arion joined *Junimea* and served as Minister of Religion and Public Instruction under Premier Petre P. Carp. His efforts centered on bringing the Romanian Orthodox Church under government control, with the purpose of regulating religious education.[14] He oversaw the collecting and publishing historical documents, edited by Nicolae Iorga.[15]

Arion made significant efforts to reverse the policies adopted by Spiru Haret, his National Liberal predecessor. He sacked Haret's favorites and replaced them with *Junimea* men, but also introduced legislation which made bureaucratic office incompatible with a teaching position.[16] The two politicians also differed in matters of church policies. Haret had favored the married clergy over the elitist Romanian Synod, creating a Consistory to represent both sides. Arion reversed that reform, and unwittingly prolonged the conflict well into the 20th century.[17]

After the Carp government was dissolved in 1901, Arion returned to academic life. He was still active with the constitutionalist *Junimists*, worked as editorial adviser for their magazine, *Convorbiri Literare*, and, in 1907, followed them into their merger with the Conservative Party.[6] Answering Maiorescu's call, Arion and Delavrancea became political journalists for the main Conservative-*Junimist* daily, *Epoca*.[18] By also appointing Arion at *Convorbiri Literare*, Maiorescu was reaffirming his directorial role. Arion and other new staff members were supposed to undermine the editorial policies of Ioan Bogdan and Mihail Dragomirescu. Maiorescu dismissed Bogdan's previous management as a triumph of *mărănie* ("churliness"), and hoped to reverse the trend.[19]

This period saw Arion networking and organizing political cabals. He personally intervened to ensure the full-time employment of aspiring jurists, including Paul Negulescu and his own nephew, Ion Peretz.[15] He met and befriended Ion Luca Caragiale, the *Junimist* political satirist. Together with Caragiale and Delavrancea, Arion could be seen dining at the Ploiești restaurant owned by Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea.[2] From 1909, Arion was also active as a philanthropist, serving on the board of Queen Elisabeth's charitable society, and as honorary president of the Romanian Artists' Society.[6]

Arion (seated at center) and Romanian journalists. Conté drawing by Ion Theodorescu-Sion, ca. 1910

Arion was again appointed Public Instruction Minister in 1910, when Carp was named Premier of a Conservative cabinet. He preserved this position after Carp was replaced with Maiorescu, while also serving as head of Internal Affairs and Agriculture and Royal Domains. It fell on Arion to adopt the set of agricultural reforms that National Liberal politicians had been postponing ever since the Peasants' Revolt of 1907.[16] At Public Instruction, he also granted religious and educational privileges to the Albanian-Romanian community.[15] During the interval, he was elected honorary member of the Romanian Academy.[16]

Arion's mandate witnessed another outbreak of civic disobedience, this time centered on the public cult of liberal symbols, including images of *Domnitor* Alexander John Cuza. In order to avoid a showdown between the Conservatives and the National Liberals, Arion agreed to inaugurate the Cuza monument of Iași.[20] At the time, Arion also made public his approval of Romanian irredentism, in respect to Bessarabia region (taken by the Russian Empire in 1812). He gave his approval to commemorative marches, and engaged in a publicized row with anti-irredentist Conservatives, such as Deputy Dimitrie Greceanu.[20]

Arion slowly aligned his educational policies with Haret's principles. The "Arion Law", adopted by Parliament in 1912, established clear criteria for the promotion of teachers and academics, ensuring greater professionalization: teaching positions were granted on the basis of a solid scientific reputation in the respective field of expertise. However, the reform law became especially noted for its loopholes, which allowed senior teachers to reserve academic chairs in advance.[21]

World War I and after [edit source]

Arion was close to the Conservative leaders Carp and Alexandru Marghiloman, and detested their competitor, Nicolae Filipescu.[15] He became president of the Bucharest Conservative Club just shortly after the start of World War I.[16] Under a National Liberal government, Romania remained a neutral country, a policy that was welcomed by the senior, "Germanophile", Conservatives: Carp, Maiorescu, Marghiloman. They were hotly opposed by another Conservative faction, under Filipescu and Take Ionescu, who demanded engagement on the Entente side.[22] As noted by his Conservative colleagues, Arion was "an optimist" committed to the Entente, but followed Marghiloman's lead.[23]

Eventually, in June 1916, the government announced that Romania had joined the Entente, and a trans-party war cabinet was suggested. Arion refused to be part of this project, declaring his sympathy for the Central Powers, and the Conservative Party split in half.[24] Constantin's brother Virgil and his son, Dinu (who was secretary of the Conservative Study Circle) shared his ideas on national politics.[25]

Following the German advance into southern Romania, C. C. Arion remained behind enemy lines, in Bucharest; the National Liberal cabinet and its Filipescu Conservative backers had relocated to a temporary home in Iași. He still represented Marghiloman's Conservative Club: traveling to Focșani, on the front line, he met representatives of the legitimate government and communicated to them the situation in Bucharest.[24] He frequented the Germanophile circle of Raymund Netzhammer and Marthe Bibesco, with whom he discussed the idea of granting the Romanian throne to a Habsburg-Lorraine prince.[26] Virgil Arion was a more radical Germanophile: he agreed to take over as Minister of Public Instruction in the puppet government of Lupu Kostaki, answering to the occupiers.[27]

After the shock of the October Revolution and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Romania yielded to the Central Powers. Marghiloman was appointed Premier, and agreed to sign Romania's withdrawal from the war (May 1918). Arion, as Marghiloman's "second fiddle"[28] and Foreign Minister up until October 24, was one of the signatories of the Treaty of Bucharest.[29] He was privately enthusiastic about the turn of events, since he believed that Romania would recover at the same time some of its irredenta, claimed from the Russian Republic, and the territories held by the Central Powers.[15] In this capacity, he traveled to the Russian breakaway region of Bessarabia (or Moldavian Democratic Republic). Representing Romania, he witnessed the Bessarabian–Romanian union.[24] He also made significant efforts to postpone the ratification of Marghiloman's surrender, allowing Romania to reenter the war on the Central Powers.[24]

While affiliated with Margiloman's Conservative Party, Arion also joined the eclectic anti-liberal movement, or People's League (the future "People's Party"), whose leader was the war hero Alexandru Averescu.[30] His son followed in his footsteps, running on the Conservative list in the 1918 elections.[31] In early 1919, Virgil Arion was arrested by the Romanian authorities, on charges of collaborationism. He was freed in short while, but virtually disappeared from public life until 1930.[32] Despite his own displays of loyalty, C. C. Arion was also marginalized as a Germanophile by the returning National Liberals.[24]

Arion was asked to explain himself before a university inquiry committee, but he never honored the request.[33] He died in Bucharest on June 27, 1923.[24] He had been the recipient of various orders of merit: a Grand Cross of the Order of the Crown, the Order of the Redeemer, and the Order of St. Sava; a Grand Officer of the Order of Carol I, the Star of Romania, and the Legion of Honor.[24] His son Dinu became a professional historian and lecturer at the Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies.[34]

Notes [edit source]

1. ^ Boia, p.156
2. ^ *a b* (in Romanian) Constantin Țoiu, "Fără șase 1OO (III)", Archived 2013-11-03 at the Wayback Machine, in *România Literară*, Nr. 37/2003
3. ^ Filitti (I), p.9
4. ^ Filitti (I), p.10
5. ^ *a b c d e f* Gheorghe & Șerbu, p.167
6. ^ *a b c* Gheorghe & Șerbu, pp.167, 168
7. ^ Boia, p.163
8. ^ Filitti (II), pp.10–11
9. ^ Gheorghe & Șerbu, p.124, 167, 171
10. ^ Ornea, pp.91–92
11. ^ Ornea, p.225-226
12. ^ "Informații. Alentatul de la șosea", in *Epoca*, October 2, 1896
13. ^ Paul Cernat, *Avangarda românească și complexul periferiei: primul val*, Cartea Românească, Bucharest, 2007, pp.42–43. ISBN 978-973-23-1911-6
14. ^ Gheorghe & Șerbu, pp.167–168
15. ^ *a b c d e* Filitti (II), p.9
16. ^ *a b c d* Gheorghe & Șerbu, p.168
17. ^ (in Romanian) Paul Brusanowski, "Biserica și constituționalismul. Cum de s-a putut ajunge la schisma bisericească din Ardeal din AD 2005?" Archived 2013-11-05 at the Wayback Machine, in *Transilvania*, Nr. 1/2006, p.14
18. ^ Ornea, p.122
19. ^ Ornea, p.129–130
20. ^ *a b* (in Romanian) Andi Mihalache, "Gîlceavă politică în jurul statuii lui Cuza", in *Ziarul de Iași*, January 24, 2008
21. ^ (in Romanian) Cătălin Botoșineanu, "Recrutarea corpului profesoral al universității din Iași la Începutul epocii interbelice. Cazul Petre Andrei", in *Anuarul Institutului de Istorie George Barițiu. Series Historica*, 2008, Romanian Academy, George Barițiu Institute of History, pp.219–223, 233–234
22. ^ Filitti (I), p.9-10; Gheorghe & Șerbu, p.168-169
23. ^ Filitti (I), pp.9–10
24. ^ *a b c d e f g* Gheorghe & Șerbu, p.169
25. ^ Boia, pp.65, 152–157; Filitti (II), p.11
26. ^ Boia, pp.181–182
27. ^ Boia, p.12, 86, 156–157, 203, 223–224, 360; Filitti (II), p.10
28. ^ Boia, p.48
29. ^ United States Department of State (1918). *Texts of the Roumanian "Peace"*. Washington Government Printing Office. p. 113.
30. ^ (in Romanian) Duiliu Zamfirescu, Ioan Adam, *În Basarabia* [*permanent dead link*], Editura Biblioteci Bucureștiot, Bucharest, 2012, pp.25–26. ISBN 978-606-8337-29-6
31. ^ Boia, p.153; Filitti (II), p.11
32. ^ Boia, p.153, 356, 358. See also Filitti (I), p.10
33. ^ Boia, p.350
34. ^ Filitti (II), p.11

References [edit source]

- Lucian Boia, *"Germanofilii". Elita intelectuală românească în anii Primului Război Mondial*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 2010. ISBN 978-973-50-2635-6
- (in Romanian) Georgeta Filitti, "Arion (I)", in the Mihail Sadoveanu City Library *Biblioteca Bucureștiot*, Nr. 5/2008, p. 9-10; "Arion (II)" [*permanent dead link*], in *Biblioteca Bucureștiot*, Nr. 6/2008, pp. 9–11
- (in Romanian) Constantin Gheorghe, Miliana Șerbu, *Miniștrii de interne (1862–2007). Mică enciclopedie*, Romanian Ministry of the Interior, 2007. ISBN 978-973-745-048-7
- Z. Ornea, *Junimea și junimismul*, Vol. I, Editura Minerva, Bucharest, 1998. ISBN 973-21-0561-5

Wikimedia Commons has media related to *Constantin C. Arion*.

v · t · e **Foreign Ministers of Romania** [show]

v · t · e **Interior Ministers of Romania** [show]

v · t · e **First Carp cabinet (July 7, 1900 – February 13, 1901)** [show]

v · t · e **Second Carp cabinet (December 29, 1910 – March 28, 1912)** [show]

Categories: 1855 births | 1923 deaths | Politicians from Bucharest | People of the Principality of Wallachia | Members of the Romanian Orthodox Church | Romanian nobility | National Liberal Party (Romania, 1875) politicians | Conservative Party (Romania, 1880–1918) politicians | People's Party (interwar Romania) politicians | Romanian Ministers of Agriculture | Romanian Ministers of Culture | Romanian Ministers of Education | Romanian Ministers of Finance | Romanian Ministers of Foreign Affairs | Romanian Ministers of Interior | Members of the Chamber of Deputies (Romania) | Members of the Senate of Romania | Junimists | Lawyers from Bucharest | Romanian philanthropists | Finance law scholars | Academic journal editors | Romanian magazine editors | Romanian opinion journalists | Romanian expatriates in France | Romanian people of World War I | University of Paris alumni | Sciences Po alumni | University of Bucharest faculty | Honorary members of the Romanian Academy | Grand Crosses of the Order of the Crown (Romania) | Grand Crosses of the Order of St. Sava | Grand Officers of the Légion d'honneur | Grand Officers of the Order of the Star of Romania

This page was last edited on 22 March 2021, at 06:17.

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.

Privacy policy About Wikipedia Disclaimers Contact Wikipedia Mobile view Developers Statistics Cookie statement

Powered by MediaWiki